

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
RAILWAYS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2825
ANSWERED ON:21.03.2002
WAGONS LOADED WITH TIMBER
RAGHUVIR SINGH KAUSHAL

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether about 200 wagons loaded with timber from the North East and sold through public auction were impounded at various railway stations by the officers of Ministry of Environment and Forests during October 1999 to January, 2000 in pursuance of the Hon'ble Supreme Court order dated January 15, 1998;

(b) if so, the reasons for impounding the said wagons;

(c) whether the auction was carried out after informing the buyers; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL)

(a) & (b) Yes, Sir. On receipt of information regarding transport of illegal timber from the North East in the garb of legal timber, Special Investigation Team (SIT) of the Ministry of Environment and Forests, constituted under the order of the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India, conducted physical verification of about 200 wagons loaded with timber and found significant irregularities and illegalities.

(c) After necessary investigations, issue of show cause notices and personal hearings, confiscated timber was sold by the Special Investigation Team (SIT) by inviting sealed tenders through Newspapers advertisements.

(d) Does not arise.